









SCHOLAE CANCELLARII.

*Training of Candidates for Holy Orders  
at Lincoln.*

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A LETTER TO THE RIGHT REVEREND  
THE LORD BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE.

BY

EDWARD WHITE BENSON, D.D.,  
*CHANCELLOR OF LINCOLN.*

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Lincoln :

JAMES WILLIAMSON, PRINTER, HIGH STREET.



*The Chancery, Lincoln, August 23, 1875.*

MY DEAR LORD,

At the recent Meeting of the Archdeacons and Rural Deans of the Diocese under your presidency, I was requested to put on paper the substance of a statement which, by your Lordship's desire, I then made to them as to what I had been able to try to do towards the training of Candidates for Holy Orders in the Diocese of Lincoln during the past eighteen months.

It was taken up as the simplest mode in which it seemed possible to serve the Church in this matter. Dr. Vaughan had shewn how much could be done in an entirely unpretending way, and at Lincoln there were ancient lines traced on which it seemed delightful to build. It can scarcely be called a scheme at all on account of its simplicity. There is no originality about it, for it was taking the obvious means to supply a practical want. It has almost surprised me to find such ready means the very best I could conceive—I speak of the able and laborious staff now at work. And the idea has this merit, that any successor can alter or elaborate it to any extent to suit other aims.

1. The statutes of our Cathedral provide for, and its history witnesses to the existence (at times in great vigour) of the *Cancellarii Scholæ* under an officer of whose special duties one was to teach, train, and examine Students in Theology—"Scholas regere et in illis actualiter legere . . . . Etiam examinabit transmittendos ad ordines." He was assisted by a Vice-Chancellor and others. Progressive historical changes have so acted as first to attract to the Universities the clerical students from the whole country, and then to appropriate differently benefits provided for them; and in this diocese especially to disconnect it from two colleges at Oxford (Lincoln and Brasenose) founded and endowed by its bishops. While we must desire and earnestly labour on many accounts to have as many as possible of our clergy educated in the Universities, it becomes evident that there is not only room, but a large demand for others who cannot be so trained. So that, while the necessity returns on us, an Officer is already provided for who in times of need must again feel called upon to take up duties characteristic of his appointment, though for a time in abeyance.

2. To discharge such a duty efficiently towards any number of men with a due regard to the acquirements expected for Ordination, requires much assistance. It seemed that the fees payable by students might ultimately provide for at least one Tutor who should give up his whole time to training and instruction in conjunction with the Chancellor. In order to make the experiment, two personal friends (unconnected with this diocese) gave me £300 a year for three years. We were most happy in obtaining assistance at once learned and spiritual, laborious and sympathetic. Mr. Crowfoot, late Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford, an old Rugbeian, recently a Missionary at Delhi, was willing to make the trial with me. He is now ready to resign his living, and give himself to the work. Your Lordship resigned your Prebendal Stall of Buckden in order to give Mr. Crowfoot a dignified position in the venerable Cathedral which is the symbol and centre of diocesan work, and you took the first step towards the re-endowment of that stall. Shortly afterwards I was able (on a vacancy) to appoint Canon Crowfoot to the Vice-Chancellorship, an ancient office instituted for this purpose, and still entitled to an annual honorarium. These details are no further valuable than as exemplifying how long ago our Cathedrals provided for our modern work.
3. Kindest answers to requests for voluntary help were immediately given. The Precentor has lectured twice a week on a Greek Gospel, and once on Ancient Church History. The Subdean has precluded every Ordination with a course on Pastoral Theology. The Archdeacon of Lincoln has given a course on the Prophet Amos, and other lectures. The Rev. Canon G. G. Perry has for some time past lectured on the History of the Reformation, and the Rev. Canon J. M. Barrett on Hebrew. The Rev. Arthur Hutton, Rector of Spidlington, at once offered regular courses on the History and Construction of the Prayer Book, which he has continued ever since. The special value of these Lectures cannot be rated too highly. They have been most serviceable. And one important part of them is the lesson of devotion to great causes which they read to the students and to us all. This is no slight viaticum to men setting out on the road of self-dedication.
4. Another important side of training is afforded by the kindness of Lincoln Clergy who have found the circumstances of their parishes such as to make the help of young laymen available. Placed in twos or threes, entirely under the direction (for this purpose) of the Incumbent, they have worked in Sunday Schools, Parochial Visiting, Sunday Services,



and Addresses to working men and others. They have, I trust, been of use, and they have received much benefit from their association with the Clergy.

5. We have assigned to our use two Lecture-rooms in the Old Palace by your Lordship, and you are, I believe, now planning the restoration of Bishop Alnwick's Tower, which will supply further accommodation for the same purpose.

We are allowed to hold our early Morning Prayers in a chapel of the Cathedral, where we have the shortened service allowed by law, and twice in the week an exposition by course of the Bible.

Lastly, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge allowed us to make a valuable selection from their publications; and of the Library of the late Canon Gilbert, bequeathed to St. Augustine's College, the Warden and Fellows of that Society presented us with those books of which they had duplicates.

6. The number of *Students* whom we have received since January 1874 is 25. Of these 10 have been ordained, of whom 3 are Students still, having taken curacies in which they could continue their studies through the year of diaconate. At present, therefore, we have 18 with us.

Six of our Students have graduated at Oxford or Cambridge. Five have been Nonconformist Ministers or Local Preachers.

7. We have 3 *Terms* a year amounting to 31 weeks. For *Fees* it did not seem possible to charge less than the £30 required by Theological Colleges.
8. I consider that the *Course* and *Residence* must be at least two years for others, and for Graduates one. Our subjects are well marked out by our Ordination Examinations and the "Preliminary Examination for Holy Orders," conducted by the Theological Faculty of the University of Cambridge.

Our Lectures are at least two daily, except on Saturday, when there is a written Examination in some subject of lectures. Once a fortnight a Sermon is written on a given text, and corrected.

The outline thus given of our work has certain characteristics.

9. It is probably as inexpensive to its supporters and to the Students as any which could be adopted. (a) We do not require a Collegiate Building. It might be a satisfaction to taste and a means of discipline to have a material College. But we must not need that kind of discipline for men on the eve of Ordination. Such as are not a law to themselves are not

fitter to be Clerical Students than to be Clergy, and all such Tastes are more than satisfied by our attachment to the Minster. (b) We do not require the means or the staff necessary for a Common Life. It would be an experiment of doubtful happiness for persons who vary much in age, position, antecedents. In lodgings it is easier to suit habits to means; uninterrupted industry is easier; clique, or the overpowering influence of one opinion, is more readily escaped. (c) We do not require a sum to be raised for Salaries. The Chancellorship of the Cathedral provides general Direction, and a share of the Lectures. The Voluntary Services of learned beneficed clergy do much more (as I have said) than *instruct* our Students; as long as this devotion lasts we have the best teaching, and when it ceases, there will be no more clergy. The Stipend required for one authority entirely devoted to this work (the Vice-Chancellor) and so unbeneficed, and for other Tutors, should the number of Students increase, may be provided by fees of Students. The re-endowment of a stall, according to your Lordship's desire, in connection with this work, would be the best step towards ensuring its *permanent* efficiency. (d) *What remains then as really wanted in the way of external help is simply assistance to worthy poor Students*, to enable them to pay their fees, buy books, and in some cases, partly to aid in their maintenance, which must cost them about £1 1s. a-week, for 31 weeks of two years. We do not desire a Capital Sum for an Endowment, but we do much want annual gifts for *Bursaries* for Students. While, as I have said, utmost inexpensiveness is given by such free help as we have, and our "working expenses" are a few shillings a year, it is by help offered for particular Students (such men as I often hear of, and of whom we have some), that assistance can be rendered in the most direct way to eager and deserving labourers, and the work of the church be promoted through their efficiency.

I do not then see a necessity for making an Appeal for the erection and foundation of a Theological College. Our ends may be answered more simply, and upon lines already in existence.

I believe that in the larger and the smaller undertakings of the Church what is wanted is usually forthcoming at the right time, especially in answer to faithful prayers made in the Name of her Lord. Hitherto I have received all that I wanted, and more than I hoped. Our probable requirements are now (so far as I can see) becoming larger, and many of the clergy have wished to have at hand precise statements, believing that wealthy laymen would with gladness help (if they knew them) such needs as I shall explain :—

Our present Students furnish types of all that we are likely to have. I need not now speak of University men, and men of some means or family whose habits and acquirements have been most serviceable to us.

Others belong to clerical families, in which every association of clerical duty and all boyish education have fitted them for this work. They have lacked the means to obtain University Education, and now cannot, or scarcely can, be maintained and found in books and fees for two years.

Others have early been placed in business or in offices, and after often faithful exertions bestowed with difficulty on Sunday school or parish help, find themselves able, or almost able, to obtain with us an education to fit them for realising a long cherished desire.

Others have been Nonconformists by early association, or have been made so by impressions which have won them to serious religion, who now find the unsatisfyingness of ordinances without the Church, and the cramping of dogmas pressed to the exclusion of other equally necessary truths.

Our men of the two latter classes have made courageous sacrifices present and prospective. They tell us of others who cannot even by sacrifices reach what they feel impelled to hope for, and of able men who dare not try certain conclusions which might land families in distress.

10. I state the amounts which I have received. I have not entirely expended them, because (in feeling my way) I have been obliged to decline to advance much beyond the *fees* themselves in any one case. But this has sent away some men, who in the numerous curacies, for which we are asked to find candidates, would make noble workers. I was asked what annual sum I felt I wanted to carry out the idea. The difficulties of answering are apparent, for the supply of means would attract good men to the task of preparation. But I believe that if I had more than as much again it could be judiciously expended in Bursaries to poor Students and would yield large results.

I am, my Dear Lord,

Your faithful affectionate Servant,

E. W. BENSON,

*Chancellor of Lincoln.*

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